

Advanced Placement United States History Zinn Assignments

Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition).

Chapter 2 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 1 – “Columbus, the Indians and Human Progress”. **Assignment:** Before reading the chapter: Write down all that you think you know about Columbus, including myth as well as reality. Examples: Columbus sailed in 1492; people believed that the earth was round; Columbus sailed on three ships. While or after reading the chapter: Write down passages in the text that either support or contradict each item generated by the assignment above, then identify those events and actions discussed in the text that had not been part of your thinking about Columbus originally.

Chapter 4 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 2 – “Drawing the Color Line”. **Assignment:** Answer the following questions: 1) Zinn argues that racism is not natural but a product of human choice and historical circumstances. Given the forces that created racism, what choices need to be made to undo it? 2) Zinn argues that racism is not natural. Does he mean that it is caused by human decisions or historical forces? Explain your answer by first defining the differences between historical forces and human decision. What is a historical force? Do such forces compel humans to make decisions that they would not have made?

Chapter 5 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 4 – “Tyranny is Tyranny”. **Assignment:** What role did each of the events listed below play in causing conflict between the colonial elites and England (or their representatives in America); the colonial people (lower orders) and colonial elites; or the colonial people (lower orders) and England (or their representatives in America). (NOTE: You will have to go to texts other than Zinn for some of the answers.) a. French and Indian War, b. growth of trade between England and its American colonies, c. Proclamation Line of 1763, d. “...six black rebellions...and forty riots” all occurring between 1676 and 1760, e. Stamp Act of 1765, f. mechanics’ demand for political democracy in the cities, g. Privates Committee’s bill of rights, h. tenant riots from the 1740’s through the 1760’s, i. Regulator Movement, j. Townshend Acts of 1767, k. quartering of British troops in 1768, l. impressments of sailors, m. impounding of ships in admiralty courts under the specifications of the Sugar Act, n. Tea Act of 1773, o. Boston Port Act of 1773, p. Massachusetts Government Act of 1774.

Chapter 6 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 5 – “A Kind of Revolution”. **Assignment:** The U.S. was: (defend your choice with detail) a. “A work of genius put together by lies humane men, who created a legal framework for democracy and equality”, b. A work of genius put together by rich men to benefit their economic interests, c. A work of genius which balances the interests of slaves, indentured servants, women, men without property and men with property, d. A compromise between slave holding interests of the South and monied interests of the North, e. All of the above.

Chapter 8 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 6 – “The Intimately Oppressed”. **Assignment:** Take a standard American history textbook and compare its treatment of the following points with Zinn’s treatment of them in this chapter. (If the traditional text does not address one of the points below, speculate as to why the text excluded it.) a. Means by which women came to Colonial America, b. The unique experiences of indentured women (as distinct from indentured men), c. The different legal status of single and married women in Colonial America, d. The significance of Anne Hutchinson’s story, e. The role of women in the American Revolution, f. Abigail Adams, g. Women’s magazines, h. “Cult of true Womanhood” (“Cult of domesticity”), i. The reasons women became mill workers, j. The experiences of women mill workers in the 1830’s and 1840’s, k. Francis Wright, l. Emma Willard, m. Elizabeth Blackwell, n. Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, o. Sojourner Truth, p. Sarah and Angelina Grimke, q. Seneca Falls.

Chapter 9 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 7 – “As Long As the Grass Grows and the Water Runs”. **Assignment:** Is there any parallel between Bacon’s rebellion and the Indian wars preceding the War of 1812 with respect to the dynamics among the Indians, poor whites, and rich

whites? If so, explain how the situations are parallel. If not, what factors are different enough so that there is no structural parallel?

Chapter 13 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 8 – “We Take Nothing By Conquest, Thank God”. **Assignment:** Who were the opponents to the war? How did they manifest (in word and deed) their opposition to war? To what degree were their tactics effective? How could they have been more effective (what were the obstacles in the way of their success)?

Chapter 14 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 9 – “Slavery without Submission, Emancipation without Freedom”. **Assignment:** How were the following used as methods of controlling not only the slave population but poor whites as well? A. force, B. segregation, C. Religion. What is the evidence that it was dangerous to slave masters to allow poor whites and blacks to fraternize?

Chapter 18 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 11 – “Robber Barons and Rebels” **Assignment:** How did the educational system function as a tool to reproduce the system? In your experience are today's educational structure, common methods, and content any different from what they were in the late nineteenth century?

Chapter 20 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 12 – “The Empire and the People” **Assignment:** Debate Resolution: The United States consciously provoked a war with Spain in order to acquire colonies from Spain.

Chapter 22 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 14 – “War is the Health of the State”. **Assignment:** Debate Resolution: A government needs to silence dissent when it is at war. Consider the following when defending or disagreeing with the resolution: purpose of war; quantity and quality of dissent; method of expression of dissent; threat to governments war aims by such dissent; threat to lives of soldiers by dissent; threats to civil rights at the time and for the future.

Chapter 24 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 15 – “Self Help in Hard Times” **Assignment:** What evidence does Zinn use (and how does he use it) to support his argument that the New Deal legislation was intended “To reorganize capitalism in such a way as to overcome the crisis and stabilize the system; also, to head off the alarming growth of spontaneous rebellion....” Include (but do not necessarily limit yourself to) the following in your answer: NRA, AAA, Wagner Act, Minimum Wage Act of 1938, Social Security Act, WPA, (theater, writer and arts projects), and the FEPC.

Chapter 25 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 16 – “A People's War” **Assignment:** Debate Resolution: The dropping of the Atomic bomb on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a military necessity.

Chapter 28 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 17 – “Or Does It Explode?” **Assignment:** What are the differences and similarities between SNCC and the IWW. Consider the following when answering: goals, tactics, strategies, tools, media response, government response (local, state and federal), membership, degree of success.

Chapter 29 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 18 – “The Impossible Victory – Vietnam” **Assignment:** Debate Resolution: U.S. government conduct of the Vietnam War revealed that America is not a democracy.

Chapter 30 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 21 – “Carter, Reagan, Bush – The Bipartisan Consensus” **Assignment:** Assess the validity of the following statement made by George Kennan as quoted by Zinn: “The general affect of Cold War extremism was to delay rather than hasten the great change that overtook the Soviet Union by the end of the 1980's.”

Chapter 31 [text]: Zinn, Howard. *People's History of the United States* (abridged teaching edition). Chapter 25 – “The 2000 Election and the War on Terrorism” **Assignment:** What happened in the 2000 elections? Research and report on the historical precedence of 1876 and 1888. Then discuss the following quotation: “Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year’s presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation’s confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.”